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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA







THE
SOCIETY OF CINCINNATI
IN THE
STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE
PLANTATIONS.



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RHODE ISLAND

Society of Cincinnati.

THE ANNUAL MEETING IN THE STATE
HOUSE, AND COMMEMORATIVE
DINNER AT THE

NARRAGANSETT HOTEL,

PROVIDENCE, R. I.,

ON THE

FOURTH OF JULY, 1878.



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RHODE ISLAND SOCIETY OF CININNATI.

ANNUAL MEETING AND COMMEMORATIVE DINNER.

In accordance with the time-honored custom, the "Society of Cincinnati in the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations," held its annual meeting Fourth of July noon, and partook of the annual commemorative dinner in the afternoon. The meeting was held in the Senate Chamber, at the State House, and was presided over by the President, Hon. Nathaniel Greene, of Newport, descendant of Gen. Nathanael Greene. There were present the Vice President, Hon. Simon Henry Greene, of Riverpoint, a descendant of Col. Christopher Greene; Secretary Dr. Henry E. Turner, of Newport, a descendant of Surgeon Turner; Treasurer Samuel C. Blodget, Esq., descendant of Major Blodget; Assistant Secretary, Prof. Asa Bird Gardner, of the United States Military Academy, West Point, a descendant of Lieut. Jonathan Willard; Assistant Treasurer, Dr. David King, a descendant of Surgeon King; James M. Varnum, of New York, descendant of Brigadier General James M. Varnum; Daniel W. Lyman, descendant of Colonel Daniel Lyman, afterwards Chief Justice of Rhode Island; Thomas Vincent Carr, descendant of Colonel Jeremiah Olney, the last colonel in the line, by whom the colors of the regiment were turned over to the State; Hon. James M. Clarke, Hon. Amos Perry, Hon. J. M. Addeman; also, in accordance with the provisions of the Association, the eldest sons of some of the members, who are entitled hereditarily to membership, and are allowed the privileges of attending the meeting and the commemorative dinner.

The Society of the Cincinnati was formed in 1783 at the close of the Revolutionary War, of the officers of the United States army who served three years in the regular Continental line, and to be perpetuated by the eldest male descendants of those officers, or when there are no direct male descendants, by those of collateral branches. Baron De Steuben was the first President. The Society

was divided, for the purpose of convenience, into State Societies, one in each of the original thirteen States. Some of the Societies have died out, and there are but seven or eight now in existence. Gen. Nathanael Greene was the first President of the Rhode Island Society. This Society has been out of existence for thirty or forty years, but has recently been resuscitated. In commemoration of the union of the American and French armies the ribbon of the badges is of blue and white, the white representing the lily of France. Most of the badges worn at this meeting were nearly one hundred years old. The colors presented to the State by Col. Olney, were displayed in the hall, by permission of the General Assembly, at its recent session. These State Societies have a triennial convention, and it is a curious coincidence that at the first triennial convention, held in 1784, three of the five Rhode Island delegates were Gen. Nathanael Greene, Gen. James M. Varnum, and Col. Daniel Lyman, while at the last triennial convention, held last May, three of the delegates were descendants of the three named and bore exactly the same names. And it may be stated that these three were at this meeting.

The meeting was opened in due form, Rev. Jas. G. Vose, of the Massachusetts Society, performing the chaplaincy services. After the routine business the following were elected members of the Society:

David Barclay Kirby, grandson of Hon. Ephraim Kirby, Surgeon.

Henry Waterman Holden, great grandson of Gen. William Allen.

Rev. John Henry Rogers, grandson of Lieut. John Rogers.

Charles Prior, grandson of Ensign Jabez Barney.

Gen. Horatio Rogers, grand-nephew of Lieut. Robert Rogers.

Henry Thayer Drowné, grandson of Surgeon Solomon Drowné.

Horace S. Bloodgood, great grandson of Surgeon Isaac Senter.

Win M. Davis, grandson of Capt. Robert Davis.

Moses Douville Coburn, great grandson of Capt. Pierre Douville, Continental Navy.

Daniel H. Barton, grandson of Gen. William Barton, captor of Gen. Prescott.

Messrs. Kirby, John H. Rogers, Prior, Horatio Rogers, Drowné and Holden appeared and formally joined the Society.

The report of the Treasurer, showing the finances of the Society to be in good condition, was read and accepted.

The annual report of the Secretary was also read and accepted. This report was a long one, and showed that much progress had been made in getting together documents formerly belonging to the Society and in putting the Society in good condition.

The report of the delegates to the general convention at Philadelphia, in May last, was also presented and accepted.

The report of the Standing Committee was also

presented and accepted. The report gives an account of the doings of the past year. The Committee recommended the passage of the following resolutions:

Whereas, This Society on the fourth day of July, 1798, did expel an original member, Captain Lieutenant Joseph Arnold, for paying a small debt in paper money—said sum being a legal tender for the discharge of such obligation and

Whereas, Captain Arnold was an officer of the Revolution who did creditable and valuable service to the State, and subsequently maintained a respectable position in society to his decease, and

Whereas, The cause of his expulsion was not an illegal or frivolous act involving moral turpitude, but rather political in its nature—and consequently not examinable here—although undoubtedly considered serious by our honored revolutionary members of “federalistic political proclivities,” therefore,

Resolved, That said resolution of expulsion be, and it is hereby, rescinded and declared null and void, and so noted on the record.

Resolved, By the Society of Cincinnati, in the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations, that the rule adopted on the fourth day of July, 1800, at the annual meeting in Providence, by which each applicant for hereditary membership should pay into the Society’s treasury on his admission thirty dollars, be hereby revived and after this date in full force and effect, but this payment may be waived by the Society.

Resolved, That hereafter all applicants for membership whose ancestors respectively through whom they make claim were never original members of the Cincinnati, shall, upon admission into this Society, pay into its treasury as a condition precedent thereto the sum of one hundred and fifty dollars.

Any member of the Cincinnati in another State Society joining the Society by transfer shall pay into the treasury the sum of \$30, but shall never be entitled, either personally or as to his family, to enjoy relief from the Society’s permanent fund, unless the full sum of \$150 shall have been contributed.

In the election into this Society of any person hereditarily entitled to admission (but not previously formally admitted) into any other State Society, the sum of \$150 will hereafter be required as a contribution to the permanent fund of the Society.

The resolution concerning Joseph Arnold was passed unanimously. Concerning the second, Prof. Gardner stated that it was considered that \$150 was about a fair average of an officer’s pay, with simple interest up to this time. One of the State Societies requires an admission fee of \$700, and another requires \$600 under these circumstances, but the Committee considered \$150 was fair. As to the \$30 admission fee, that was the same as in the other States. Prof. Gardner also stated that the Massachusetts Society had a permanent fund of \$70,000, Pennsylvania \$60,000, and other States several thousand, while the funds of this Society had dwindled down into hundreds. This state of the Society’s finances was due to the fact that the Society loaned to its members of the fund on promissory notes. Some of the members who stood high in the army, and some of whom also performed honorable civil service afterwards, became straightened in circumstances, and as the

relief from Congress in the shape of pensions came too late, the Society loaned them money. This was a good thing to do, but it reduced the finances very much. The resolution was then passed.

The Committee to apply to the General Assembly to resuscitate the charter also presented their report, to the effect that the Assembly had refused to grant the prayer of certain petitioners that the Society be abrogated, and had passed an amendment to the charter declaring the present members of the Society the true corporators, and that the Society had never been dissolved. The original charter and the amendment were read and the report was accepted.

The Committee to apply to the General Assembly to obtain "for the use of the Society, on all occasions, the historic standard of colors of the First Regiment Rhode Island Continental Infantry of the Revolution," also submitted a report, which was accepted, and from which we take the following:

The General Assembly, as an expression of its continued confidence in our honorable old Society, by resolution passed May 30th, 1873, complied with our request. These historic old flags saw service in the battle of Rhode Island, siege of Yorktown, and surrender of Lieut. Gen. Earl Cornwallis's army to His Excellency General Washington and the allied French and American armies, 19th October, 1781. They subsequently saw service in the expedition under Col. Marinus Willett, from Fort Herkimer to Fort Oswego, from the 8th to the 13th February, 1783, and although unsuccessful, evoked from Washington his "warmest thanks." On the 28th February, 1784, the Rhode Island Continental officers, founders of our Society, through Colonel Jeremiah Olney, whose great-grandson represents him with us to-day, presented this stand of colors, here displayed, to the Rhode Island General Assembly. On the same day the Governor and Legislature jointly responded, and, among other things, said: "With peculiar satisfaction they recollect the bravery and good conduct of the officers of the line of this State, who, after suffering all the toils and fatigues of a long and bloody contest, covered with laurels, have re-assumed domestic life. They are happy in receiving these standards, which have often been displayed with glory and bravery, in the face of very powerful enemies, and will carefully preserve the same to commemorate the achievements of so brave a corps."

The question of publishing the Memorial Register came up, when Dr. Turner stated that Mr. S. S. Rider was to publish it. In this connection Dr. Turner stated that the register had been prepared by Prof. Gardner, and contained a complete military history of every original member of the Rhode Island Society. He complimented Prof. Gardner in the highest terms for his efficiency in preparing this work, and moved a vote of thanks to him for these services. Messrs. Lyman and Perry also complimented the work, and Col. Rogers said that from conversation with Mr. Rider concerning the manner of its publication he was certain the setting would be worthy the jewel. The vote of thanks to Prof. Gardner was then passed.

Letters were read from the Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, and South Carolina Societies, congratulating the Society on its resuscitation.

Rev. John H. Rogers, Professor of Union College, was appointed Chaplain for the ensuing year.

Lieutenant Governor William Greene, a descendant of Col. Ray Greene, was elected an honorary member.

The officers of the past year were reelected, as given above.

A resolution was passed authorizing the Treasurer to demand from the Union Bank, the four shares of stock belonging to the Society, and all dividends, and the Treasurer was also authorized to collect other sums and receipt therefor.

The following were elected delegates to the next General Convention: Nathaniel Greene, David King, A. B. Gardner, J. M. Clarke, H. E. Turner. Alternates, D. W. Lyman, J. M. Varnum, S. C. Blodgett, Horatio Rogers.

A resolution was passed authorizing the Standing Committee to take such action as it may deem necessary with reference to the celebration of the battle of Rhode Island, August 29th next.

Prof. Gardner, in accordance with the custom, then read the principles on which the Society is founded, Chaplain Rogers offered the closing prayer, and the meeting adjourned.

THE COMMEMORATIVE DINNER.

Upon the adjournment of the meeting, the Society formed in line and, bearing the faded flags so full of history, marched to the Narragansett Hotel for the commemorative dinner. Beside the members of the Society and those entitled to partake of the dinner, there were present United States Senator Anthony and Mayor Doyle as invited guests, while letters were read from Senator Burnside and Hon. Zachariah Allen, expressing regrets at their inability to accept the invitation extended them to be present.

After the dinner letters were read from Pennsylvania, New Jersey and other societies, congratulating the Rhode Island Society on its resuscitation, and the following thirteen toasts were given, according to custom, being the same given at the commemorative dinner of the Society in 1787, 1788, 1789 and 1800:

I. The Government of the United States of America.

Response by Hon. R. B. Anthony.

II. The State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations. May virtue and wisdom ever direct its measures.

Response by Hon. J. M. Addeman, Secretary of State.

III. The memory of His Excellency General Washington, our first President-General.

Drank in silence.

IV. The 17th of October, 1777, and 19th of October, 1781.

Response by Prof. Asa Bird Gardner.

V. The memory of His Most Christian Majesty, Louis XVI.

VI. Our Brethren of the Order of Cincinnati, now assembled in their respective States. May the recollection of their and our ancestors' services together in the war for American Independence, at the capture of Ticonderoga; sieges of Boston, St. John's and Quebec; battles of Long Island, White Plains, Trenton, Princeton, Brandy-

wine, Germantown, Monmouth, Rhode Island, Guilford Court House, and Eutaw Springs; and in the cantonments at Morristown, Valley Forge, and High Hills of Santee, continue to encourage them and us in maintaining inviolable the patriotic and beneficent principles on which our Society is founded.

Response by Rev. J. G. Vose.

VII. The patriots who fell in the Revolutionary war. The earth which covers their bones shall support the monuments of their glory.

Response by Henry Thayer Drowne.

VIII. The Day. May every return of it bring to the people of the United States increase of wisdom, strength and virtue.

Response by Mayor Doyle.

IX. Our first President, Major General the Hon. Nathanael Greene, whose services as Commanding General in the Carolinas gave independence to those States, and marked him as one of the greatest military minds of his age.

Response by Hon. Amos Perry.

X. The destruction of H. B. M. armed schooner *Gaspee*, 10th June, 1772, fit precursor of the daring deeds on sea of Commodore Abraham Whipple, Silas Talbot and Pierre Douville, and startling evidence to George III. that the people of Rhode Island knew their rights and dared maintain them.

Response by Gen. Horatio Rogers.

XI. The fair friends of the Cincinnati.

Response by James M. Varnum.

XII. The Rhode Island Continental Line of the Revolution: Worthy successors of her provincial troops in the earlier contests, and noble examples to her regiments in subsequent wars, who emulated their renown and brought honor to the State.

Response by Dr. David King.

XIII. Peace and Prosperity to our Country.

Response by Dr. Henry E. Turner.

Of the responses to the sentiments, and of the various other good things said and done at the dinner, verily the outer world must forever remain in ignorance, for was it not set down by the managers that none but the members of the Society and invited guests should be regaled thereby.

NOTE.—The preceding article was printed in the *Providence Journal*, Vol. LII, No. 160, on Saturday, the 6th of July, 1878, and the editors of that estimable paper will please accept the thanks of the undersigned for their very appreciable courtesy, as also for the use of the types. The original members of the Cincinnati *not* dead, but living in their descendants.

HENRY T. DROWNE,
No. 52 Wall St., New York, N. Y.







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